



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION IX

**75 Hawthorne Street
San Francisco, CA 94105-3901**

MAY 22 2015

Mark Thompson
Buena Vista Biomass Power, LLC
4655 Coal Mine Road
Ione, California 95640

Dear Mr. Thompson:

Buena Vista Biomass Power, LLC ("Buena Vista") currently owns and/or operates the biomass-fired electric generating facility at 4655 Coal Mine Road in Ione, California (the "Facility"). The Facility is under the primary jurisdiction of the Amador County Air District. For the purpose of determining whether the Facility is in compliance with its operating permit, Prevention of Significant Deterioration of Air Quality ("PSD") requirements, New Source Review ("NSR") requirements, federal New Source Performance Standards ("NSPS") requirements, federal National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants ("NESHAP") requirements, and other requirements of the Clean Air Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 7401-7671q (the "Act"), you and Buena Vista are hereby required, under authority of Section 114 of the Act, 42 U.S.C. § 7414, to submit the following information and documents to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 9 ("EPA") for the identified Facility:

1. Identify the following dates:
 - a. Initial construction date of the Facility;
 - b. Initial date that the Facility combusted fuel;
 - c. Initial date of commercial operation of the Facility, i.e. production and sale of electrical power;
 - d. Date of your purchase or acquisition of the Facility;
 - e. Date that the Facility ceased operation for any period that lasted a year or more (and identify the length of the time that the Facility was not producing power);
 - f. If the Facility is not currently operating, the date that it ceased operation; and
 - g. If the Facility is not currently operating, the expected date of recommencement of commercial operations.
2. Provide a copy of the Facility's current power purchase agreement.
3. Provide a schematic diagram of the Facility that identifies each potential emission source (i.e. that emits any particulate or gaseous air pollutant), emission control device, and process step. Emission sources, or emission units, include, but are not limited to, the biomass-fired boiler, any auxiliary boilers, fuel and ash handling systems, and internal combustion engines.
4. For each process unit and/or process step at the Facility that has the potential to emit any air pollutant, including but not limited to sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, particulate matter, carbon monoxide, and volatile organic compounds, provide a description of how the emission unit or process step functions, and identify operational parameters including, but not limited to, normal

and maximum processing temperatures and normal and maximum feed rates. For any process unit and/or process step that you conclude does not have the potential to emit any pollutants, please provide a copy of any documents upon which you relied for that conclusion.

5. Describe the following in regard to how emissions are monitored at the Facility:
 - a. Identify each pollutant that is monitored;
 - b. Describe the nature (i.e. stack tests, continuous monitoring, etc.) and the frequency (i.e. annual, monthly, continuous, etc.) of the monitoring; and
 - c. For each pollutant monitored, describe if it is monitored by a continuous emission monitoring system ("CEMS") or continuous opacity monitoring system ("COMS"), and indicate the dates that each CEMS and/or COMS was installed and became operational.
6. Provide copies of the following existing records for the emission control device(s) at the Facility:
 - a. The make, model number, and description/specification of each control device;
 - b. Detailed explanation of how emissions are routed, including a description of any capture mechanism;
 - c. Documentation of how emissions factors, including capture efficiencies, were derived, at each process emission point from the use of each control device and the maximum hourly emission rates used to determine emissions;
 - d. A list of operating limits for each emission control device, the method used to establish the values, and the effective date of these operating limits; and
 - e. Any biomass-boiler bed operating temperature measurements.
7. Pertaining to the permitting status of the Facility, provide copies of the following:
 - a. Each current air permit;
 - b. Each/all permit application(s) and supporting documents for each air permit or for each air permit that the Facility is currently seeking, whether or not such a permit has been issued or proposed;
 - c. Any major source permits issued at any point, including PSD and NSR permits;
 - d. Any synthetic minor permits; and
 - e. Any District analysis or correspondence pertaining to each permit and/or each permit application identified in response to Requests #7.a. and 7.b.
8. For each biomass-fired boiler at the Facility, provide:
 - a. The unit identification number;
 - b. The date commercial operation began;
 - c. The original design capacity (megawatts gross, MWg/net generating capacity);
 - d. Current gross and net generating capacity (MWg/MWn);
 - e. The original design and current maximum heat input capacity (MMBTU/hr);
 - f. The original design and current steam flow output capacity (lbs steam/hr);
 - g. The current operating status of the boiler;
 - h. The scheduled or planned boiler retirement date;
 - i. Current fuel(s) being fired;
 - j. Type of particulate matter emissions control and year installed;

- k. Type of sulfur dioxide emissions control and year installed;
 - l. Type of nitrogen oxides emission controls and year installed;
 - m. Type of carbon monoxide emission controls and year installed; and
 - n. Any anticipated emission controls and estimated dates of installation.
9. Provide in chart form a list of each and every capital projects, with a cost of more than \$50,000, for the Facility for which:
- a. Began actual construction after January 1, 2000; and
 - b. Those which are approved or expected to begin construction in the next 36 months.
10. For each project identified in response to Request #9, include the following information in a list format:
- a. The work order number for the project;
 - b. Project description;
 - c. Authorized or projected expenditure;
 - d. Actual expenditure;
 - e. Date of approval;
 - f. Project completion date or expected completion date;
 - g. In-service date;
 - h. Identification of each original equipment manufacturer ("OEM"), equipment suppliers, or contractors that will provide or have provided engineering, fabrication, and/or installation services for the project; and
 - i. State whether the capital project was associated with a life extension project, capacity increase, efficiency enhancement, or reliability improvement.
11. For each project identified in response to Request #9, also provide copies of the following documents, records or information:
- a. All capital appropriation requests and/or approvals for such expenditures, regardless of format or title of such request and/or approval;
 - b. All emission calculations performed before and after the capital project was completed;
 - c. All correspondence with the District or any regulatory agency regarding the potential applicability or exemption of any provision of the Clean Air Act or the applicable State Implementation Plan ("SIP"), including, but not limited to, New Source Review ("NSR")/PSD, NSPS, NESHAP, and opacity requirements;
 - d. All engineering analyses, correspondence, memoranda, telephone discussion summaries, and any other communications, including, but not limited to, Board of Directors reports, meeting minutes, and annual reports, that describe the original as-built performance and performance for the period immediately before and immediately following completion of each capital project, the benefits, provide justification for, or otherwise explain the nature, extent, cost, and frequency of each capital project. This request includes communications both before and after the capital project was undertaken;
 - e. All associated purchase orders;
 - f. All contracts relating to purchase of equipment and on-site installation or construction for the project;
 - g. Any permits received for the project; and

- h. Documents related to the maximum continuous rating of the boiler, both before and after the project was completed, including, but not limited to, documentation of changes in:
 - i. Unit capacity factor;
 - ii. Unit availability;
 - iii. Boiler heat input;
 - iv. Steam flow rate;
 - v. Steam temperature;
 - vi. Steam pressure;
 - vii. Unit heat rate (BTU/MWh); and
 - viii. Unit efficiency.

The information (other than the documents to be provided) shall be provided in electronic chart format (Microsoft Excel 2007 compatible).

- 12. Provide the following information starting from January 1, 1995 until the date of this Request:
 - a. For each emissions test (including, but is not limited to, compliance testing, engineering testing, and testing for general information), provide the following:
 - i. List: Identify the emissions unit, the date of the test, and the test method(s) used. For each test during which the source was not operating at maximum design capacity, provide an explanation for why production was limited.
 - ii. Copies: Provide copies of the summary pages, including the results, for each emissions test, the section describing the process parameters and production or processing rates at the time of the test, all test runs, and all calculations.
 - b. In electronic chart format (Microsoft Excel 2007 compatible), provide daily and monthly total mass (in lbs) and rates (in lb/MMBTU) of emissions from the Facility for NO_x, SO₂, CO, PM, and PM₁₀, and average opacity, including all supporting calculations, log sheets, continuous emissions and opacity monitoring system data, and measurements used to determine emissions. These emissions or other operating parameter data must be provided, even if the calculations are based upon source test emission factors and daily energy production. If spreadsheets are used to calculate emissions, provide a formula for each column in the spreadsheet.
- 13. In chart form, identify and provide monthly quantities of each type of fuel burned at the Facility since May 1, 2010.
- 14. For the Facility, provide copies of all documents, including reports, correspondence, memoranda, and phone discussion summaries, related to PSD, NSR, NSPS, or NESHAP applicability for any construction or modification undertaken between May 1, 2000, and the date of this Request.
- 15. Identify in an electronic spreadsheet file (Microsoft Excel 2007 compatible) all time periods (including their dates between January 1, 2000 and the date of this Request) when the boiler or any of the emissions control devices were non-operational, along with the reason it was not operating.
- 16. Pertaining to the compliance status of the Facility, provide copies of any notices or documents issued by the state and/or local air permitting authority or authorities pertaining to the following:
 - a. Major or Minor Deficiency;

- b. Significant Non-Compliance (SNC);
 - c. Non-Reporting;
 - d. Permit Exceedance;
 - e. Notices of Opportunity to Correct (NOC);
 - f. Notices of Violation (NOV);
 - g. Administrative Order; or
 - h. Civil Complaint.
17. For the Facility, by complete corporate or individual name, provide a list of all owners and operators, including all previous owners and operators, since initial construction of the Facility to the present, including the date of any transfers and the percentage ownership for each owner of the Facility and/or the percent ownership of member or shareholder of each corporation or LLC that owned the Facility. If known, provide the current address, phone number, and state(s) of residence and/or incorporation for each past or current owner, shareholder or member.
18. Provide copies of all documents, including correspondences that reference the explosion that took place on May 29, 2013, including but not limited to its impact on monitoring and/or compliance with applicable requirements.

Buena Vista shall submit its response to this request postmarked no later than forty-five (45) calendar days after receipt of this letter. Buena Vista must provide copies of all responsive documents as PDF files with optical character recognition (i.e., searchable). Buena Vista must provide all data in electronic chart format (Microsoft Excel 2007 compatible) that allows for data to be used in calculations. The documents shall be chronologically organized by each information request identified above. If Buena Vista has no documents responsive to an individual information request, Buena Vista must so state in its written response. Buena Vista's response must be signed by a responsible corporate official of Buena Vista. Buena Vista must submit responsive documents on a disk (2 copies as CD or DVD media) along with a cover letter that includes Buena Vista's written responses to the requests via certified mail with return receipt requested to the following address:

Ms. Kathleen H. Johnson
Director, Enforcement Division (ENF-1)
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
75 Hawthorne Street
San Francisco, CA 94105

Attn: Roshni Brahmabhatt (ENF-2-1)

Please be advised that under Section 113(a) of the Act, failure to provide the information required by this letter may result in an order requiring compliance, and order assessing an administrative penalty, or a civil action for appropriate relief. In addition, Section 113(c) of the Act provides for criminal penalties for knowingly making any false statements or omission in any response required under the Act. EPA may also seek criminal penalties from any person who knowingly alters, destroys, mutilates, conceals, covers up, falsifies, or makes a false entry in any record, document, or tangible object with the intent to impede, obstruct, or influence the investigation or proper administration of any matter within the jurisdiction of EPA or in relation to or contemplation of any such matter or case. See 18 U.S.C. § 1519. The information provided by you may be used by the United States in administrative, civil, or criminal proceedings.

You may, if you desire, assert a business confidentiality claim on behalf of Buena Vista covering part or all of the information provided to EPA in response to this letter. Any such claim for confidentiality must conform to the requirements set forth in 40 C.F.R. § 2.203(b). You are advised that certain information may be made available to the public pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 7414(c) and 40 C.F.R. § 2.301, notwithstanding a claim that such information is entitled to confidential treatment. If no claim of confidentiality is received with your reply, the information may be made available to the public without notice to Buena Vista.

If Buena Vista seeks to withhold any documents based on a claim of attorney-client communications privilege or the attorney work product doctrine in its response to this information request, provide a privilege log for each document containing the following information:

1. The date, author(s), every individual to whom the document was originally sent, every individual who subsequently acquired the document, the purpose for which the document was sent to or obtained by those individuals, and the employment titles of the authors and recipients;
2. The subject matter of the document;
3. The privilege claimed for the document and all facts supporting the claim of privilege;
4. The primary purpose(s), including any business purposes, for which the document was made;
5. The question(s) in EPA's information request that the document is responsive to; and
6. All facts contained in the document that are responsive to a question in EPA's 114 letter.

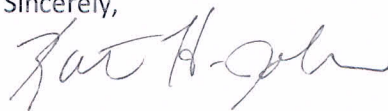
This information request is not subject to review by the Office of Management and Budget under the Paperwork Reduction Act because it is not the "collection of information" within the meaning of 44 U.S.C. §§ 3502(3) and 3518(c)(1), since it is being directed to fewer than ten persons or entities and is being issued during the conduct of an investigation involving the EPA against specific individuals or entities. See also 5 C.F.R. §§ 1320.3(c) and 1320.4.

We would also like to take this opportunity to advise you that Buena Vista may qualify as a "small business" under the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement and Fairness Act ("SBREFA"). Please review the enclosed SBREFA Information Sheet, which is designed to provide information on compliance assistance to entities that may qualify as small businesses as well as to inform them of their right to comment to the SBREFA Ombudsman concerning EPA's enforcement activities. Please be aware that SBREFA does not eliminate Buena Vista's responsibility to respond in a timely fashion to any complaint or information request that EPA may issue or other enforcement action that EPA may take, nor does SBREFA create any new rights or defenses under the law other than the right to comment to the SBREFA Ombudsman.

If you anticipate being unable to respond fully to this request within the time period specified, you must submit a sworn declaration by a responsible corporate official within ten (10) calendar days after your receipt of this letter, specifying what information will be provided within the time specified, describing what efforts have been/are being made to obtain other responsive information and providing a detailed schedule of when such other responsive information can be provided. Upon receipt and based upon such declaration, EPA may extend the time in which responsive information must be provided. Also, please contact us if you determine that a full response to a particular request would require an extremely large amount of documents to be provided in response. Based upon such notification, EPA may modify the method of production or scope of documents required to be produced.

If you have any questions regarding this request, please contact Roshni Brahmbhatt of my staff at (415) 972-3995, or have your attorney contact Ivan Lieben of the Office of Regional Counsel at (415) 972-3914. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Kathleen H. Johnson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Kathleen H. Johnson
Director, Enforcement Division

Enclosure

cc: Jim McHargue, Air Pollution Control Officer
Amador County

U.S. EPA Small Business Resources Information Sheet

The United States Environmental Protection Agency provides an array of resources, including workshops, training sessions, hotlines, websites and guides, to help small businesses understand and comply with federal and state environmental laws. In addition to helping small businesses understand their environmental obligations and improve compliance, these resources will also help such businesses find cost-effective ways to comply through pollution prevention techniques and innovative technologies.

EPA's Small Business Websites

Small Business Environmental Homepage - www.smallbiz-enviroweb.org

Small Business Gateway - www.epa.gov/smallbusiness

EPA's Small Business Ombudsman - www.epa.gov/sbo or 1-800-368-5888

EPA's Compliance Assistance Homepage

www.epa.gov/compliance/assistance/business.html

This page is a gateway to industry and statute-specific environmental resources, from extensive web-based information to hotlines and compliance assistance specialists.

EPA's Compliance Assistance Centers

www.assistancecenters.net

EPA's Compliance Assistance Centers provide information targeted to industries with many small businesses. They were developed in partnership with industry, universities and other federal and state agencies.

Agriculture

www.epa.gov/agriculture/

Automotive Recycling

www.ecarcenter.org

Automotive Service and Repair

www.ccar-greenlink.org or 1-888-GRN-LINK

Chemical Manufacturing

www.chemalliance.org

Construction

www.cicacenter.org or 1-734-995-4911

Education

www.campuserc.org

Food Processing

www.fpeac.org

Healthcare

www.hercenter.org

Local Government

www.lgean.org

Metal Finishing

www.nmfrc.org

Paints and Coatings

www.paintcenter.org

Printed Wiring Board Manufacturing

www.pwbrc.org

Printing

www.pneac.org

Ports

www.portcompliance.org

U.S. Border Compliance and Import/Export Issues

www.bordercenter.org

Hotlines, Helplines and Clearinghouses

www.epa.gov/epahome/hotline.htm

EPA sponsors many free hotlines and clearinghouses that provide convenient assistance regarding environmental requirements. Some examples are:

Antimicrobial Information Hotline

info-antimicrobial@epa.gov or
1-703-308-6411

Clean Air Technology Center (CATC) Info-line

www.epa.gov/ttn/catc or 1-919-541-0800

Emergency Planning and Community Right-To-Know Act

www.epa.gov/superfund/resources/infocenter/epcra.htm or 1-800-424-9346

EPA Imported Vehicles and Engines Public Helpline

www.epa.gov/otaq/imports or
734-214-4100

National Pesticide Information Center

www.npic.orst.edu/ or 1-800-858-7378

National Response Center Hotline -

to report oil and hazardous substance spills
www.nrc.uscg.mil or 1-800-424-8802

Pollution Prevention Information Clearinghouse (PPIC)

www.epa.gov/opptintr/ppic or
1-202-566-0799

Safe Drinking Water Hotline

www.epa.gov/safewater/hotline/index.html or 1-800-426-4791

Stratospheric Ozone Protection Hotline

www.epa.gov/ozone or 1-800-296-1996

Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) Hotline
tsca-hotline@epa.gov or 1-202-554-1404

Wetlands Information Helpline
www.epa.gov/owow/wetlands/wetline.html or 1-800-832-7828

State and Tribal Web-Based Resources

State Resource Locators
www.envcap.org/statetools

The Locators provide state-specific contacts, regulations and resources covering the major environmental laws.

State Small Business Environmental Assistance Programs (SBEAPs)
www.smallbiz-enviroweb.org

State SBEAPs help small businesses and assistance providers understand environmental requirements and sustainable business practices through workshops, trainings and site visits. The website is a central point for sharing resources between EPA and states.

EPA's Tribal Compliance Assistance Center
www.epa.gov/tribalcompliance/index.html

The Center provides material to Tribes on environmental stewardship and regulations that might apply to tribal government operations.

EPA's Tribal Portal
www.epa.gov/tribalportal/

The Portal helps users locate tribal-related information within EPA and other federal agencies.

EPA Compliance Incentives

EPA provides incentives for environmental compliance. By participating in compliance assistance programs or voluntarily disclosing and promptly correcting violations before an enforcement action has been initiated, businesses may be eligible for penalty waivers or reductions. EPA has two such policies that may apply to small businesses:

EPA's Small Business Compliance Policy
www.epa.gov/compliance/incentives/smallbusiness/index.html

This Policy offers small businesses special incentives to come into compliance voluntarily.

EPA's Audit Policy
www.epa.gov/compliance/incentives/auditing/auditpolicy.html

The Policy provides incentives to all businesses that voluntarily discover, promptly disclose and expeditiously correct their noncompliance.

Commenting on Federal Enforcement Actions and Compliance Activities

The Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act (SBREFA) established a SBREFA Ombudsman and 10 Regional Fairness Boards to receive comments from small businesses about federal agency enforcement actions. If you believe that you fall within the Small Business Administration's definition of a small business (based on your North American Industry Classification System designation, number of employees or annual receipts, as defined at 13 C.F.R. 121.201; in most cases, this means a business with 500 or fewer employees), and wish to comment on federal enforcement and compliance activities, call the SBREFA Ombudsman's toll-free number at 1-888-REG-FAIR (1-888-734-3247), or go to their website at www.sba.gov/ombudsman.

Every small business that is the subject of an enforcement or compliance action is entitled to comment on the Agency's actions without fear of retaliation. EPA employees are prohibited from using enforcement or any other means of retaliation against any member of the regulated community in response to comments made under SBREFA.

Your Duty to Comply

If you receive compliance assistance or submit a comment to the SBREFA Ombudsman or Regional Fairness Boards, you still have the duty to comply with the law, including providing timely responses to EPA information requests, administrative or civil complaints, other enforcement actions or communications. The assistance information and comment processes do not give you any new rights or defenses in any enforcement action. These processes also do not affect EPA's obligation to protect public health or the environment under any of the environmental statutes it enforces, including the right to take emergency remedial or emergency response actions when appropriate. Those decisions will be based on the facts in each situation. The SBREFA Ombudsman and Fairness Boards do not participate in resolving EPA's enforcement actions. Also, remember that to preserve your rights, you need to comply with all rules governing the enforcement process.

EPA is disseminating this information to you without making a determination that your business or organization is a small business as defined by Section 222 of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act or related provisions.